

May 29, 2013

Representative Bob Latta
2448 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Jim Matheson
2211 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Latta and Matheson:

Prescription drug counterfeiters have placed our nation's patients at risk; their criminal actions take advantage of the current patchwork of state laws that could allow venue-shopping for the best locale in which to expose patients to unsafe and counterfeit prescription drugs. Further, because drug distribution is truly interstate in its nature, any policy solution that does not create a uniform, national standard means patients across the United States will still be exposed to counterfeit drugs. It's an incredibly dangerous situation, and we write today to thank you for your leadership in establishing a federal track-and-trace law with which to combat this problem. The recent passage of HR 1919, the Safeguarding America's Pharmaceuticals Act of 2013, from the House Energy and Commerce Committee is a vital step in this process; we thank you for your leadership on this issue and look forward to its full consideration on the House floor.

The risk of counterfeiting cannot be overstated: without a single, uniform and national solution that secures the supply chain, continued counterfeiting could expose patients to grave danger. As FDA Director Janet Woodcock testified in April, "An effective national track and trace system for all drug products throughout the supply chain would improve the security and integrity of the drug supply and ensure transparency and accountability of product distribution. Many of the challenges we have with securing the supply chain – including contamination, diversion, counterfeiting... could be addressed by such a system."

As a law enforcement organization whose members work professionally to reduce prescription drug diversion and criminal counterfeiting, we agree that a uniform code which allows for the electronic monitoring of the distribution of finished prescription drugs in the domestic supply chain could improve transparency, diversion, contamination, counterfeiting and accountability in the prescription drug supply chain.

As you proceed to full consideration of the track and trace system, we ask that you keep the interests of local law enforcement and drug diversion officers in mind. A national system could deter opportunists' ability to focus their efforts on states whose state laws allow for criminal infiltration. Tracking packages destined for patients is a good defense against criminals who would profit from contaminating or stealing these medicines, and put patients at risk.

We thank you for your work on this issue, and encourage you to keep both patients and law enforcement concerns in mind as you look to move the Safeguarding America's Pharmaceuticals Act through the legislative process and ultimately signed into law.

Sincerely,

Mike Willis
Executive Director
United States Deputy Sheriff's Assoc.

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CC: House Energy and Commerce Chairmen Fred Upton

House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health Chairman Joe Pitts